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QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING
THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE
AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 13 January 1998 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In follow-up to my letter of 24 December 1997 (A/52/754-S/1997/1011), I wish to refer to further, extremely dangerous statements made by Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel. On 8 January 1998, the Prime Minister said "We cannot go back to a country that is 10 or 12 kilometres wide". In addition, he described the capture of the West Bank during the 1967 war as "the most important strategic development in the history of the Jewish State other than its inception".

These statements obviously sustain illegal claims by this Israeli Government to at least parts of the occupied territory since 1967. They are a reflection of expansionist intentions, which in fact destroy the crux of the current Middle East peace process and the mutual recognition between the Israeli and Palestinian sides. Once more, such statements add to the urgency of the needed action by the General Assembly to ensure that the participation of Israel in the work of the General Assembly is consistent with international legitimacy, including international law, provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant United Nations resolutions.

On another front, on the same day, the Israeli Government approved the construction of 574 new units to be added to the illegal settlements in the occupied territory. Moreover, on 10 January 1998, plans were revealed by the Israeli Housing Ministry for the construction of more than 30,000 additional

units in the illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem.

Such actions are very dangerous and they grossly violate international law as well as agreements reached between the parties. Measures by the international community to confront these Israeli statements, positions and actions are imperative in order for the Charter of the United Nations to be upheld and the Middle East peace process to be saved.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36, 37 and 87 of the fifty-second session, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nasser AL-KIDWA
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations